

What is claimed is:

1. A method for operating a wallpaper printing business, comprising the steps of:

utilizing an on-demand printer comprising a cabinet in which is located a media path which extends from a

5 media loading area to a printhead and from the printhead to a dispensing slot;

using one or more printer input devices which communicate with a processor to capture data regarding one or more customer's requirements;

the data comprising at least a customer selected pattern;

printing a roll of wallpaper, onto a web of blank media, on demand, according to the selected pattern; and

10 charging a customer for the roll.

2. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of:

allowing the customer to select a width;

capturing the width as data with a printer input device; and

15 using the printer to slit the web to the width.

3. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of:

allowing the customer to select a roll length;

capturing the roll length as data with a printer input device; and

20 using the printer to cut the web to the roll length.

4. The method of claim 3, further comprising the step of:

charging the customer only for the length.

25 5. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of:

acquiring data from a touchscreen display which is also adapted to display the pattern.

6. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of:

providing the printer with a scanner for capturing data that specifies a selected pattern or other data.

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7. The method of claim 4, further comprising the step of:

allowing the customer to select a media type and using that media type in the printer.

8. The method of claim 1, wherein:

- 5 the customer selected pattern is selected by the customer from a collection of swatches which correspond to patterns that the printer is able to print on demand.

9. The method of claim 8, wherein:

the customer can use an input device to alter how the printer prints a selected pattern.

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10. The method of claim 8, further comprising the step of:

providing a collection of swatches;

assigning a symbol to each swatch;

- 15 using the symbol as an input by using a printer input device.

11. The method of claim 1, wherein:

the customer's requirements comprise a pattern and a configuration;

the configuration being one or more parameters selected from the group comprising: roll length, a roll slitting

- 20 arrangement, one or more modifications to the pattern, or a selection of media to be printed on.

12. The method of claim 1, wherein utilizing an on-demand printer further comprises:

loading a media canister into the printer, the canister containing an unprinted web of media; and

using a motor in the printer to advance the unprinted web into the path;

- 25 automatically threading the media from the loading area, to the dispensing slot.

13. The method of claim 1, wherein utilizing an on-demand printer further comprises:

loading a disposable media tote into a winding area adjacent to the dispensing slot;

winding a printed roll of wallpaper onto a core inside the tote; and

- 30 severing the printed roll on the core from the web.

14. The method of claim 13, wherein utilizing an on-demand printer further comprises:

severing the printed roll on the core from the web using an automated cutting mechanism inside the printer,
5 the cutting mechanism receiving a signal for commencing cutting from the processor.

15. The method of claim 1, wherein printing a roll of wallpaper according to a selected pattern further comprises:

using a full width, color printhead to print onto the web while it is in motion along the path.

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16. The method of claim 15, further comprising the step of:

drying the web after it is printed on but before it is dispensed by the printer.

17. The method of claim 1, wherein:

15 an operator uses the printer for a customer.

18. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of:

allowing a customer to design a custom pattern defined by data;

using the one or more input devices to capture the data; and

20 printing the custom pattern on demand.

19. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of:

selling printed rolls as they are produced to eliminate printed wallpaper inventory.

25 20. A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein the web of blank media is printed by the printhead at a rate exceeding 0.02 square meters per second (775 square feet per hour).

21. A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein the web of blank media is printed by the printhead at a rate exceeding 0.1 square meters per second (3875 square feet per hour).

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22. A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein the web of blank media is printed by the printhead at a rate exceeding 0.2 square meters per second (7750 square feet per hour)"

23. A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein the printhead has more than 7680 nozzles

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24. A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein the printhead has more than 20,000 nozzles

25. A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein the printhead has more than 100,000 nozzles

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26. A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein the printhead has more than 250,000 nozzles

27. A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein the printhead prints ink drops with a volume of less than 5 picoliters

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28. A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein the printhead prints ink drops with a volume of less than 3 picoliters

29. A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein the printhead prints ink drops with a volume of less than 1.5 picoliters

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30. A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein the printer is a self contained printer for producing rolls of wallpaper, the printer comprising:

a cabinet in which is located a media path which extends from a media cartridge loading area to a winding area;

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a full width digital color printhead located in the media path;

a processor which accepts operator inputs which are used to configure the printer for producing a particular roll; and

the winding area adapted to removably retain a core and wind onto it, wallpaper produced by the printer.

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31. A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein utilizing an on-demand printer further comprises:

loading a media cartridge into the printer, the media cartridge, comprising:

a case in which a roll of blank media may be deployed;

the case having two halves, hinged together, an area between the two halves, when closed, defining a media supply slot; and

- 5 the case having internally and adjacent to the slot, a pair of rollers, at least one of the rollers being a driven roller which is supported at each end, by the case, for rotation by an external motor.

32. A method as claimed in claim 1 further comprising the step of providing a consumer tote for carrying the roll of wallpaper, the tote comprising:

- 10 a disposable exterior in which is formed a main access flap and a pair of core access openings; and
the tote having an interior in which is located a disposable core which is aligned with the access openings.

33. A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein the printer has a transverse cutter, the transverse cutter comprising:

- 15 a chassis having end plates;
the end plates being separated to allow a web of media to pass between them;
the end plates supporting between them a cutting blade; and
the blade supported at each end to perform a cutting motion which begins on one side of the web and finishes on an opposite side of the web.

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34. A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein the printer has a slitting mechanism, the slitting mechanism comprising:

- a chassis having end plates;
the end plates being separated by a transverse portion of the chassis to allow a web of media to pass between
25 them;
one or more rotating slitting shafts extending between the end plates, each shaft having one or more slitters arranged along its length, each slitter having a cutting edge; and
the slitting mechanism selectively engageable to either enter or not enter a path followed by the web according to an input provided by an operator of the printer.

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35. A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein the printer has a dryer, the dryer comprising:
 a compartment with a top opening for receiving a media web fed from the printer;
 a source of heated air located above the top opening for blowing heated air into the opening to dry printing on
 the media web.

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36. A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein the printer comprises:
 a cabinet in which is located a media path which extends from a media loading area to a winding area;
 a printhead located in the media path;
 a processor which accepts operator inputs from one or more input devices which are used to configure the
 printer for producing a particular roll; and
 the winding area adapted to removably retain a core and wind onto it, wallpaper produced by the printer
 wherein,
 the length and design of the roll are determined by the operator inputs.

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37. A method as claimed in claim 1 further comprising the steps of:
 utilizing an on-demand printer comprising a cabinet in which is located a media path which extends from a
 media loading area to a winding area, there being a printhead located in the media path, a processor which
 accepts operator inputs from one or more input devices;
 using one or more input devices which communicate with the processor to capture data from an operator
 regarding a specification for an operator's requirements;
 using the processor to operatively control the printer according to the data; and
 printing a single roll of wallpaper, on demand, according to a selected pattern.

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38. A method as claimed in claim 1 for operating a wallpaper printing franchise, further comprising the steps
 of:
 providing to franchisees, an on-demand printer comprising a cabinet in which is located a media path which
 extends from a media loading area to a printhead and from the printhead to a dispensing slot;
 the printer having one or more printer input devices which communicate with a processor to capture data
 regarding one or more customer requirements, the data comprising at least a customer selected pattern;

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providing the franchisee with a collection of patterns in a digital storage medium that can be read by the printer;

enabling the franchisee to print a roll of wallpaper, onto a web of blank media, on demand, according to the selected pattern; and

5 obtaining or attempting to obtain a fee from the franchisee.

39. A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein the printer comprises:

a frame in which is located a media path which extends from a media loading area to a winding area;

a printhead located across the media path;

10 one or more input devices for capturing operator instructions;

a processor which accepts operator inputs which are used to configure the printer for producing a particular roll; and

the winding area adapted to removably retain a core and wind onto it, wallpaper produced by the printer.

15 40. A method as claimed in claim 1 for printing wallpaper onto a web of media further comprising the steps of:

utilizing an on-demand printer comprising a cabinet in which is located a media path, there being a full width printhead located across the media path, there being a processor which accepts operator inputs from one or more input devices and which controls the printer;

20 using one or more input devices which communicate with the processor to capture data from an operator regarding a specification;

running the printer according to the data;

printing a single roll of wallpaper, on demand, according to a selected pattern and configuration;

changing the pattern according to a new datum from an operator; and

25 then printing a new roll onto the same web.

41. A method as claimed in claim 1 for drying the moving web of media in the printer, the method further comprising the steps of:

loading the web in a path that traverses a compartment in a dryer within the printer, the compartment having

30 an opening across the top;

allowing the moving web to descend into the compartment, as required; and
blowing heated air from above the opening.

42. A method as claimed in claim 1 for supplying the media web to the wallpaper printer, the method further
5 comprising the steps of:
opening a reusable case;
placing into the case a core onto which has been located a supply roll of blank wallpaper media;
supporting the core for rotation within the case;
leading a free edge of the roll between a pair of rollers and past an edge of the open case; then
10 with the rollers located within the case and on either side of the web, closing the case and loading it into a
printer.

43. A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein the printer has a printhead assembly which prints onto a moving
web that follows a path, the assembly comprising:
15 a full width printhead located across the path;
the printhead comprising a color printhead which is at least as wide as the web;
the printhead being supplied with a number of different inks which are remote from the printhead and which
supply the printhead through tubes.

20 44. A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein the printer further comprises:
a housing in which is located a media path which extends from a blank media intake to a wallpaper exit slot;
a multi-color roll width removable printhead located in the housing and across the media path;
the printhead being supplied by separate ink reservoirs, the reservoirs connected to the printhead by a an ink
supply harness, there being a disconnect coupling between the reservoirs and the printhead;
25 one or more input devices for capturing operator instructions;
a processor which accepts operator inputs which are used to configure the printer for producing a particular
roll.

45. A method as claimed in claim 1 further comprising the step of providing a consumer tote for carrying the
30 roll of wallpaper, the tote comprising:

a disposable exterior in which is formed a main access flap and a pair of core access openings;
 the tote having an interior in which is located a disposable core which is aligned with the access openings;
 both openings exposing a moulded coupling, one coupling attached to each end of the core, at least one of the
 couplings being a driven coupling and adapted to engage a driving spindle that rotates the core.

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46. A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein the printer has a removable printhead assembly which prints
 onto a moving web, comprising:

a full width stationary printhead located on a rail along which it slides for service and removal;

a number of replaceable ink reservoirs which supply the printhead with different inks;

10 the printhead comprising a color printhead which is at least as wide as the web; and

the printhead being supplied with the different inks through tubes which can be disconnected so the printhead
 may be removed.

47. A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein the printer is a self threading printer for producing rolls of
 wallpaper, comprising:

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a media loading area adapted to support a media cartridge in a position so that a media supply slot of the
 cartridge is closely adjacent to a pilot guide;

a cabinet housing a media path which extends from the pilot guide to a printed media dispensing slot;

a printhead located across the media path;

20 a processor which accepts operator inputs which are used to configure the printer for producing a particular
 roll;

a motor within the cabinet for advancing a media web out of the media cartridge; and

one or more other motors adapted to urge the media along the path and out of the slot.

25 48. A method as claimed in claim 1 for producing wallpaper on-demand, further comprising the steps of:
 utilizing an on-demand printer comprising a cabinet in which is located a media path which passes a printhead
 on the way to a dispensing slot;

selecting a pattern and a configuration;

using one or more printer input devices which communicate with a processor to input the pattern and the

30 configuration; and

printing a roll of wallpaper, onto a web of blank media, on demand, according to the selected pattern and configuration.